

**WHAT IS CLAIMED**

1. An assembly for interfacing an information device with a host computer unit, comprising a cartridge that is insertable into a cartridge insertion opening of said host computer unit, and is configured to receive  
5 said host computer unit, and is configured to receive and protectively retain an information device for removable electrical and mechanical engagement with an internal electrical connector of said host computer unit that is accessible by way of said cartridge insertion  
10 opening of said host computer unit, and an external electrical connector unit that provides external electrical access to said information device.

2. The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said cartridge includes a faceplate having a sealing member that is sized to surround said cartridge insertion opening, so as to become sealed against said  
5 host computer unit by insertion of said cartridge into said cartridge insertion opening, and thereby prevent moisture and foreign matter from entering the interior of said host computer unit through said cartridge insertion opening.

3. The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said cartridge has a first portion that is configured to receive and protectively house a first information device for removable electrical and mechanical  
5 engagement with said internal electrical connector of

said host computer unit, and a second portion that is configured to receive and protectively house a second information device separate from said first information device.

4. The assembly according to claim 3, wherein said electrical connector unit is configurable to provide external electrical access to said first and second information devices.

5. The assembly according to claim 4, wherein said cartridge has a faceplate that is sealable against an exterior surface of said host computer unit adjacent to said cartridge-insertion opening, and wherein said  
5 faceplate includes a first connector that provides external access to said first information device, and a second connector that provides external access to said second information device.

6. The assembly according to claim 3, wherein said second portion is configured to receive and protectively house said second information device for removable electrical and mechanical engagement with an  
5 associated internal electrical connector of said host computer unit.

7. The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said cartridge-insertion opening of said computer unit is configured to bring a connector of said information

device retained by said cartridge into aligned  
5 engagement with said internal electrical connector of  
said host computer unit.

8. The assembly according to claim 7, wherein  
said cartridge-insertion opening is configured to  
prevent said information device from becoming dislodged  
from said cartridge in the course of removal of said  
5 cartridge from said host computer unit.

9. The assembly according to claim 7, wherein  
said cartridge-insertion opening is configured to  
prevent said connector of said information device from  
remaining engaged with said internal electrical  
5 connector of said host computer unit in the course of  
removal of said cartridge from said host computer unit.

10. The assembly according to claim 3, wherein  
said first information device comprises a PCMCIA  
(Personal Computer Memory Card International  
Association) type card and said second information  
5 device comprises a memory device.

11. The assembly according to claim 5, wherein  
said faceplate further includes a movable element  
between said first and second connectors and being  
selectively positionable so as to allow an external  
5 electrical connection to only one of said first and  
second connectors at a time.

12. The assembly according to claim 11, wherein said faceplate and said movable element are configured to provide external optical access to an optical indicator on said first information device.

13. The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said cartridge includes a support surface upon which said information device is supported, and a hold-down spring element, that is configured to be spring-biased  
5 against said information device installed on said support surface, so as to mechanically urge said information device against said support surface of said cartridge.

14. The assembly according to claim 13, wherein said cartridge further includes a generally flexible device-retention tang sized to engage said information device as retained on said support surface of said  
5 cartridge, and thereby prevent translation of said information device relative to said cartridge.

15. The assembly according to claim 14, wherein said cartridge-insertion opening includes a capture plate configured to engage said retention tang and urge said tang against said information device, in the course  
5 of insertion of said cartridge into said cartridge insertion opening that brings said connector of said information device, as retained by said cartridge, into aligned engagement with said internal electrical

connector of said host computer unit and, in the course  
10 of removal of said cartridge from said cartridge  
insertion opening, to continue to engage said retention  
tang and urge said tang against said information device,  
until said connector of said information device has  
become fully disengaged from said internal electrical  
15 connector of said host computer unit.

16. The assembly according to claim 3, wherein  
said cartridge includes a frame having a first support  
surface upon which said first information device is  
removably supported, and a second support surface upon  
5 which said second information device is removably  
captured so as to be physically and mechanically  
isolated from said first information device.

17. The assembly according to claim 1, wherein  
said cartridge-insertion opening is configured to  
prevent mutual engagement between internal circuit  
components of said host computer unit and said cartridge  
5 during insertion and removal of said cartridge.

18. A computer interface comprising a cartridge  
that is insertable into a cartridge insertion slot of  
said computer, and is configured to retain a first  
information device, such as PCMCIA type card, at a first  
5 portion thereof for engagement with an internal  
electrical connector of said computer, and is configured  
to retain a second information device, such as a memory

drive, at a second portion thereof, so that said second  
information device is mechanically and electrically  
10 isolated from said first information device, and wherein  
said cartridge is configured to retain said first  
information device in a manner that prevents translation  
thereof relative to said cartridge during removal of  
said cartridge from said computer.

19. An interface for a host computer unit  
comprising a cartridge configured to removably retain  
and protect a first information device for removable  
electrical and mechanical engagement with an internal  
5 electrical connector of said host computer unit, and to  
removably retain and protect a second information device  
in a manner that is physically and mechanically isolated  
from said first information device.

20. The interface according to claim 19, wherein  
said first and second information devices are selected  
from a PCMCIA (Personal Computer Memory Card  
International Association) type card and a memory  
5 device.

21. The interface according to claim 19, wherein  
said cartridge includes an external electrical connector  
unit that is configured to provide external electrical  
access to only one said first and second information  
5 devices at a time.

22. The interface according to claim 19, wherein said host computer unit has a cartridge-insertion slot configured to provide for the insertion of said cartridge therein and bring a connector of said first  
5 information device retained by said cartridge into aligned engagement with said internal electrical connector of said host computer unit, while preventing said first information device from becoming dislodged from said cartridge in the course of removal of said  
10 cartridge from said host computer unit.

23. The interface according to claim 22, wherein said cartridge includes a first support surface upon which said first information device is retained by a hold-down spring element mechanically urged  
5 thereagainst, and a generally flexible retention tang that engages said first information device and prevents translation of said first information device relative to said cartridge.

24. The interface according to claim 23, wherein said cartridge-insertion slot includes a capture plate, that is configured to engage said tang and urge said tang against said first information device in the course  
5 of insertion of said cartridge into said cartridge insertion slot that brings said connector of said first information device, as retained by said cartridge, into aligned engagement with said internal electrical connector of said host computer unit and, in the course

10 of removal of said cartridge from said cartridge  
insertion slot, to continue to engage said tang and urge  
said tang against said first information device, until  
said connector of said first information device has  
become fully disengaged from said internal electrical  
15 connector of said host computer unit.

25. A method for removably coupling an information  
device with an internal electrical connector of a host  
computer unit, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) installing said information device on a  
5 cartridge that is configured to support said information  
device for removable electrical and mechanical  
engagement with said internal electrical connector of  
said host computer unit, and provides electrical access  
to said information device; and
- 10 (b) inserting said cartridge upon which said  
information device has been installed in step (a) into a  
cartridge-insertion slot of said host computer unit, so  
as to bring a connector of said information device as  
retained by said cartridge into aligned engagement with  
15 said internal electrical connector of said host computer  
unit, and engaging said information device in a manner  
that prevents said information device from becoming  
dislodged from said cartridge in the course of removal  
of said cartridge from said host computer unit.

26. The method according to claim 25, wherein said  
information device comprises a PCMCIA (Personal Computer



Memory Card International Association) type card.

27. The method according to claim 25, wherein said cartridge includes a hold-down spring element adapted to mechanically retain said information device thereon as inserted in step (a), and a generally flexible retention  
5 element that engages said information device and prevents translation of said information device relative to said cartridge during insertion of said cartridge into said cartridge-insertion slot of said host computer unit in step (b).

28. The method according to claim 27, wherein said cartridge-insertion slot includes a capture plate configured to engage said retention element and urge said retention element against said information device,  
5 in the course of insertion of said cartridge into said cartridge insertion slot in step (b), so as to bring said connector of said information device, as retained by said cartridge, into aligned engagement with said internal electrical connector of said host computer unit  
10 and, in the course of subsequent removal of said cartridge from said cartridge insertion slot, to continue to engage said retention element and urge said retention element against said information device, until  
15 said connector of said information device has become fully disengaged from said internal electrical connector of said host computer unit.

29. The method according to claim 25, wherein step  
(a) further includes installing a second information  
device at a portion of said cartridge that is  
mechanically and electrically isolated from said first  
5 information device.